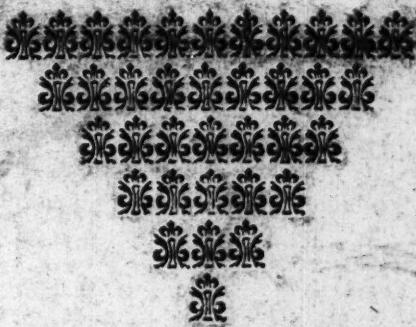


A
LETTER
TO A
L-d of the S-f-n.



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A

LETTER TO A L--d of the S--ff--n.

I Had the Honour of Your Lordship's, and did consider the inclosed printed Letter, directed to a Presbyterian Minister at Edinburgh, as Seriously and Impartially as I cou'd; and without your Lordship's express Commands, it had been too great a Piece of Presumption in me to have offer'd you my Shallow Judgment of it; but as Obedience is better than Sacrifice, I shall not scruple to acquaint Your Lordship, that I think that Paper handsomly Writ, and full of certain undoubted Truths. Such as,

I. That the Queen (as all our Sovereigns) hath an Unlimited Power of Dissolving Parliaments, and of Appointing, Continuing and Changing Her Ministers and Officers of State, as often and after what manner, She, in Her Great Wisdom shall think fit; and that it's an hainous Offence in any of Her Subjects, to murmur on this Account, since it chiefly proceeds from the Disappointment of such, who have been, and wou'd be at the Helm of Affairs, to gratifie their own Selfish Sinister Designs, tho' under the specious Pretence, of their Concern for the Publick Welfare: And since it directly tends to Disturb Her Majesty in that Just, Serene, Mild and Flourishing Course, in which She has held the Administration of Affairs, since the Commencement of Her Glorious Reign to this very Day:

II. That there is not the least reason to apprehend any Danger from a Dissolution of the Parliament, because the Nation is at liberty to Choose and Instruct their own Representatives.

Nor

Nor from such an Alteration of the Ministry, as is talked of ; because we have no reason to doubt, but what the Queen does in this Affair is for her Subjects Good, since we have undeniable Proofs of her Inclinations to make her Subjects happy during her Reign (which God long continue) and to leave them in a flourishing State after her Decease.

And we can do her Majesty's Wisdom no less Justice, than to conclude, as She's the Spring which moves all the Engines of Government, the Source from whence all Resolutions and Maxims of State arise, and the Center in which they terminate, I say she must be the best Judge of both Men and Measures. And 'tis surely upon this Account, that our Law hath lodged such Powers in their Sovereigns.

So that as the Case now stands, we may conclude our selves safe in the Queen's Hands, as knowing, and willing to do, what is best for us.

But to descend to Particulars, I know your Lordship is so fond of our Revolution Principles, that you are afraid they be shaken, both as to Church and State; but for my part I can't see where the Danger lies, if I did I shou'd be as concern'd as any other.

As for the Church, so long as the Union stands, I think it must stand, and that no Party, tho' never so episcopally inclin'd, can entertain a Thought of subverting it: Since it's so fundamental an Article of the Union, that it is declared unalterable, and cannot be broke in upon, without shaking; yea, demolishing the whole Fabrick. And I can't see, but by the Parity of Reason, that Article wherein it's agreed that the *Scots* shall pay but two Months Cess, in lieu of one Shilling in the Pound on all the Rents in *England*, and the other Articles granting Eases to the *Scots* in several Branches of Trade and Taxes, may be likewise alter'd by the Parliament of *Britain*, if they can, or contrary to all Faith, will make any Alteration of the Church Government in *Scotland*; so that I may make the same Conclusion, a certain Minister did after a learned Sermon against Popery, that if it was introduced into *Scotland* it wou'd make many a poor Lord and Gentleman, and therefore concluded the Protestant Religion secure. For upon the same Account I conclude the Presbyterian Government secure, since our Subversion of it, wou'd inevitably open a Door to strip the *Scots* of all the Immunities and Advantages they gain by the Union, and I never heard but that secular Advantages had even a great Hand in religious Concerns.

Nor

Nor do I fear the Presbyterian Government in *Scotland* in any Danger from *England*, because I can't conceive any Alteration will be formed without the Concurrence of the *Scots* Nation (which for the above-mention'd Reasons can't be obtain'd) and since the Security of the Church of *England* is founded upon the same Basis as the Church of *Scotland* in the Articles of Union, to overturn them in relation to the one, necessarily implies, that the other is subject to the same Fate, and so the Church of *England* is left to Uncertainty, which no doubt the *Scots* Nation wou'd improve and make a Handle of, in Conjunction with her Enemies, when ever a fit Conjunction happen'd.

As to the State, I think the Apprehensions of any Danger of it, are as frivolous.

For as to the Queen, Can it be supposed, that she, who did so much at the Beginning of the Revolution, and has been so firm ever since to the Maxims whereupon it's founded, can entertain such a Thought? As she never gave occasion for such Suggestions, 'tis but a bad Requital to load her with such Reflections, and I presume no Man will dare own them.

Therefore the Danger must arise from the Change of the Ministry, the good Inclinations of the Old, and the Bad of the succeeding. But before I proceed to Particulars, let me mind you, the Queen is still at the Head of Affairs.

And now is your Security lodg'd in the Old Ministry? If it be, you're at a low Pass, consider them in bulk or separately. Are they not Men subject to the same Humors, Inclinations, Ambitions, and Appetites as other People? Are there not amongst them many both in *Scotland* and *England* who did oppose the Revolution, making Speeches, and voting in both Conventions against the Abdication of the late King *James*? 'tis true when the Revolution prevail'd they struck in with the prevailing Party, but the Question is, and which I leave to all thinking and unbiass'd People to determine; did this proceed from Conviction of their Error, or to gratify their own private ambitious Designs? Are there not several in the Old *Scots* and *English* Ministry, who have been aspersed (I don't own it's true, but all their Fears of the New Ministry proceeds from Suggestions and Reports, and so what is Sauce for a Goose is Sauce for a Gander) with being concern'd in Plots to restore the late King *James* and the Pretender, and have thwarted and oppos'd the Measures of our Glorious Deliverer King *William*, as much as any Set of Men whatsoever? Whoever doubts the

Truth of this, let him read the secret History of the design'd Invasion from *La Hogue*, and that of the Revolution in *Scotland* by the E. of *B*—and let him reflect upon what appear'd in the first Session of this Parliament, when the last design'd Invasion from the Pretender, was under Consideration of the two Houses, and then let him make a Judgment of the Fidelity of the Old Ministry, and their Staunchness to the Revolution Principles: I don't care for naming Persons, but I have heard many assert, that the Truth of all or most of this general Charge, may be easily evinced from Particulars, which are well known to such as are conversant in publick Affairs.

If you say the Danger arises from the succeeding Ministry, why truly that is as obscure to me as any of the former: For in the first Place we don't yet know who all the Persons are Her Majesty will be pleased to employ. I am sure such as she has promoted of late are no ways to be fear'd, and I am sure those spoke of to be employ'd, and those who are said to be very industrious in opposing and thwarting the Old Ministry, are as little to be feared, since most of their Persons and Families are so deeply dipt and interwoven with the Interests of the Revolution, that it cannot enter into the Heart of their greatest Enemies to conceive, how they can be Enemies to it, or are carrying on Designs to overturn it.

But the Cry is, O the Tories are coming in, and the Whigs going out, and that is enough to alarm the Mob. But pray consider a little, Is it not certain that the Tories have given as great Proofs of their being stedfast to the Revolution as any other set? Pray who was it that carried thorow the Act of Succession in the Protestant Line, and that of abjuring the Pretender? And then tell me who has done most for the Revolution. No body will pretend to deny, but that the Tories were the chief and greatest Instrument of bringing the happy Revolution about.

This Mistake proceeds from a Notion we have (industriously propagated) that all the Tories are Jacobites. The Origin of that Name was to distinguish such as were for supporting the Monarchy against the Republicans, and 'tis upon this footing they still stand. They oppose the Designs of all such as are for stripping the Monarchy of its royal and necessary Prerogatives, and they defend the Sovereign from the Insults of arrogant Subjects and Servants. And if this be the Case, I'm sure we Presbyterians will never oppose them, if we wou'd have the World believe what is certainly true, tho' we have been often

up-

upbraided with the contrary, that our Predecessors were not accessory to the Hardships, to which King *Charles the First* was reduced, by the Independents and other Sectaries.

There's another Mistake in the Matter, and 'tis this, That we think the Whigs in *England* are all Presbyterians, and so we're uneasie our Brethren shou'd be out of Favour; But how great an Error is this? Do they not all appear in their Speeches and publick Professions, to be as true Sons of the Church as any other? Do they not frequent the Churches, (except such, and indeed that is very many, as go to no Religious Assemblies at all,) and keep Church of *England* Chaplains, and use the *English* Liturgy in their Families? And does any of them scruple to Communicate with the Church of *England*, upon receiving a Beneficial Post? If these be our Presbyterian Brethren, I pray God deliver us from them; for at best, they are guilty of the greatest Hypocrisie and Dissimulation imaginable, in the sight of God and Man. But the short and long of the Story is, your *English* Whigs have no Religion at all, and are Enemies to all Revealed Religion whatsoever, tho' they can above-board cry aloud for the Church, when it's their Interest to delude the People, and underhand swear Fealty to the Dissenters, when they're to make a Tool of them.

I don't deny, but that there are many *Presbyterians* in *England*, and as Good Men as any in the World; Men that abominate the Principles and Practices of the *Whigs*, with respect both to Religion and the State; But at the same time, I'm afraid there are some, who pretend to be *Presbyterians*, that are greater Enemies to Monarchy, and all Monarchs, than is consistent with the *Presbyterian* Tenets; for the Verity of which, I refer you, for further Satisfaction, to a famous Gentleman, who passes under the Name of the Bishop of *Geneva*.

For these Reasons I do think neither the Church of *Scotland*, or the Revolution in any Danger, from the design'd Dissolution of the Parliament, and the Alteration of the Ministry.

If you ask me, Whence this Change must then have its Rise? I answer, The Queen's the best and only judge; Perhaps the Old Ministry was grown too Saucy and Imperious, design'd Bad Things; I do not say it was so, but it may be so: And if you'd have my Private Notion, I have a bad Opinion of all Statesmen, and I believe the mighty Struggle and the many Professors we have heard of late, are only

only so many Handles to promote the Interests of the respective Parties and Sects of Men, whose greatest and only Quarrel is, who shall rule the Roast, and that if there were room for all, they wou'd agree better.

III. Another undoubted Truth in that Letter is, That there can be no Danger from a Dissolution of the Parliament, and Alteration of the Ministry at this Critical Juncture; for if we may guess at future Contingences from by-past Occurrences, then the Author has clearly made it out, that as great Changes have happ'ned in as Critical Times, without one Word said against them, or any bad Consequences following them; and since nothing bad was or is design'd, why should it have happ'ned otherwise than, or how can it happen now? For my part, I'll be so bold as to say, that I think such Suggestions and false Reports as are now a days spread about, are very good Arguments for the Removal of those from all Posts of Trust, as wou'd by themselves or Partizans, hector their Sovereign to a Compliance with their Designs.

IV. It's as certain a Truth, That it's bad Policy in our Presbyterians, thus to foment Jealousies of the Queen, and that it's their undoubted Interest, to procure the Continuation of Her Majesty's Royal Favour and Protection, by their Submission to Her Majesty in all Her Lawful and Just Deligns. I have heard it often asserted (how true I can't tell) that the Presbyterian Clergy's bearing too hard upon King James VI. during his Minority, and before his Accession to the English Throne, was the Cause of his Establishing Episcopacy afterwards. If it be so, let us adhere to it, and not occasion our own Ruin.

Thus, My Lord, I have intarged upon some of the Heads contain'd in that Letter you sent me: And since I have enter'd so far upon this Subject, allow me your Patience a little longer.

I think if this be so Critical a Time, as is represented, all Scots Men ought seriously to consider, what has been the Cause of Scotland's Ruin and Misfortunes heretofore, and avoid them for the future, and this will be found to be our Domestick Divisions; These were the Cause of our Civil Wars in King Charles the First's time; these drew many fatal Consequences after them in King Charles the Second's time; these encouraged King James to follow the Courses he split upon; these occasion'd the Loss of Darien; these occasion'd the Necessity of entering into an Incorporating Union with

with England, (having brought our selves to such a deplorable State that nothing else cou'd probably save us) and these still haunt us, tho' we were in hopes to be freed of them after the Union. Unanimity is the greatest Blessing can attend a Society, it makes it easie at Home, and in Reputation Abroad. From hence we expected greater Things after the Union; for we did and had good Reasons to conclude, that if we were Uuaanimous amongst our selves, the contending Parties in *England* wou'd Regard us; and it's plain we might have done much, at the beginning of this present Parliament, since the *Scots* had the Ballance at the Tryal of the *Westminster Election*, and carried it against Sir *Harry Dutton Colt*, (to let him see the *Scots* resented the impertinent Treatment he had given them and their Country in the preceeding Parliaments) notwithstanding the Endeavours of the Court and Whigs to support him. But alas! how soon did they lose that golden Opportunity, by dividing amongst themselves, and entering into bad Measures; for which they smarted soundly when the Treason Bill came into the House: However, this is enough to let the *Scots* see, what they may do yet if they please.

I remember I was told by a Gentleman who was at *London* sometime after the Commencement of the Union, that meeting an old *English* Acquaintance of his, he ask'd him, how he lik'd the Union, his Friend reply'd, Very ill, and curs'd it heartily: About the latter end of the first Parliament they met again, and then his Friend told him, he now lik'd the Union dearly; His Reasons were, That *England* was deliver'd from some Dangers she was expos'd to, from *Scotland* in a Separate State; and now he was not apprehensive of any Hazard, from the Unanimity of the *Scots* in Parliament; for he found the *Scots* Members were as great R—— as the *English*, and as much at odds one with another, and so both upon an equal Footing. The Application is easie.

But the Question is, How to redress this Grievance; and truly my Lord, I know no way, but that Care be taken to Chuse such Members, as will lay aside all unhappy Differences and Animosities (which have byass'd our Inclinations and blinded our Judgments these many Years by-past) and will join with one another for their Countries Interest.

And the only way to obtain this is, That the Shires and Burroughs (for the Peers I meddle not with them) be at pains to find out and Chuse as their Representatives to the next Parliament,

Men of Honour and Integrity, and of a good Character, and whatever their particular Perswasions may be, they will regard their Neighbour and Countries Welfare ; and

Men of Estates, for as they've a Stock to lose, they'll consider what they do, and will not be so easily brought over by Places and Pensions, and will scorn Dependance.

In consequence thereto, they must be careful not to Chuse,

Men that have given themselves up to Ambition, and preferr'd their own Gain to their Country and Friends.

Men who have no Principle, but have chop'd about with every Tide and Wind.

Men who are picqu'd and chagrin'd at the Loss of a Place or Pension, and whose Chief Design's to get or keep one.

Men who're in such a necessary Post of Dependance, either on the Court or a Subject, that they dare not Act as they Incline.

Men who have no Estates, to hold out the necessary Expences of Attending the Parliament, and must Vote for their Board Wages.

And lastly, Men who're avow'd Enemies to Monarchy.

If these Rules be observ'd in Chusing the Representatives in Parliament, I don't in the least doubt, but a New Parliament will turn to a good Account, and prove both for the Honour and Interest of Scotland ; and on the other hand, if we neglect them, we shall continue despised, and entail Misery on our Posterity.

E're I end, Your Lordship will be pleas'd to indulge me a little, to exclaim against all undue Intermeddling in the Elections: A Free Parliament is the Bulwark of Britains Liberties, and without a Free Election, we cannot have a Free Parliament; Bribing has not yet reached this Part of the Island, but we've been too much, by fatal Experience, accustom'd to Threats and other indirect Practices, from our Great Men and Persons in Authority: What a Scandal is it for our Clergy, by their concerning themselves so much, to be guilty of what they condemned so justly in the Bishops, I mean meddling in State Affairs. Besides, from what I have said before, it appears to be bad Policy, and may meet them when they don't look for it.

But I have been told some of your Brethren of the B——nch have likewise over-run themselves in this Point, and (not to mention their private Solicitations) that one of them presumed lately to threaten a certain Gentleman with the Loss of a Law-Suit he had depending, if he did not vote for the Person he recommended. I don't believe it, at least, I hope it's not true, but if it be (and if he is guilty he knows best, and let him take it to him) give me leave to say, and I can give it no softer Term, than that it is scandalous thus to pervert and make a Tool of Justice, and I think such a Judge shou'd, at least, be once more r——ed to his S——s, not to study the Law, but to accomplish himself with those other Qualifications, necessary to intitle him to the Character of a just, equal, and prudent Judge: and I am perswaded, if such a Matter were fairly represented, and clearly made out (and if such Practices continue either by plain Threatnings, or shrewd Innuendo's, no doubt in time they will) to the House of Commons, the Person so accused wou'd pass his time but indifferently. And were I the Person so threatned, as his Menaces wou'd give me a bad Impression of the Person he recommends after such a manner, and shou'd have little Impression on me, I vow, I wou'd endeavour to bring it to Light, as a Service done to my Country. Besides, such Doings are a Reflection on the Judicature, and may endanger its Constitution. I know your Lordship abominates such Practices, and therefore I have been the more free.

I beg your Lordship's Pardon for so tedious a Letter, but I know you'll excuse what is well meant, especially since your Commands gave the first Rise to it. You don't, I flatter my self, doubt my Sincerity,

cerity, I being free from all Partiality, and having no Design nor View, but the general Interest of my Country. All this Country know this is sufficient to recommend any Man to your Lordship's Favour, which at all times shall be very much honour'd, and valued by,

Your Lordship's,

Most obliged humble Servant.

Sr. Kilda, August
the 2d. 1710.

